



FISCAL YEAR 2025 FIRST QUARTER ACHIEVEMENTS (OCT- DEC 2024)



The Children’s Authority of Trinidad & Tobago (“the Authority”/ “CATT”) is a specialised agency with responsibility for the care, protection and rehabilitation of vulnerable children, especially those who are at risk or have been victims of abuse or neglect.

The work of the Authority is guided by its vision, **“to defend and support child rights and make child protection everybody’s business”**. The organisation also seeks **“to promote the best interest of children through advocacy, prevention, intervention and collaborative strategies, based on multidisciplinary approaches”**.

The information below identifies some of the key achievements of the Authority during the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2025., which represents the period October to December 2024.

ADOPTION

1. Facilitation of Sensitisation Sessions: The Adoption Unit was able to establish a relationship with the North Central Regional Health Authority. Two (2) sensitisation sessions were successfully conducted with Doctors, Nurses, and Social Workers attached to the Eric Williams Medical Sciences Complex. These sessions were focused on the adoption process and the role of health care workers in the adoption process.
2. Successful freeing and matching of 1 child with Prospective Adoptive Parents
3. Granting of an Adoption Order for 2 siblings, ages 16 and 17 years. This was an Open Adoption.

ASSESSMENT

1. Forensic Interview Training for CATT Staff: The Assessment Unit conducted training of 14 staff members in Basic Forensic Interviews in December 2024. The training was facilitated by Cornerhouse - a Child Advocacy Centre located in Minneapolis, USA, which has over 35 years’ experience in the field. The 14 staff participated in four days of intensive, hands-on training sessions, which included live simulations of forensic interviews. This successful exercise allows the Authority to increase its pool of forensically trained interviewers, which in turn will reduce the wait time for children who require this valuable service. This service utilises a person-centred, semi-structured and forensically sound methodology to interview children who have been victims or witnesses of child abuse. The approach ensures that a child is able to tell his/her story at a pace and in a manner that is most comfortable for the child and aids in reducing traumatisation.

FOSTER CARE

1. Foster Care Placements: The Foster Care Unit placed 7 children in traditional Foster Care, and 8 children in Kinship Foster Care.

2. Foster Care Training: As part of the Foster Care recruitment process to assess and approve new foster parents to increase the placement options for children in foster care, the Foster Care Unit for the period conducted 3 training sessions for new applicants, which was facilitated by Assessment and Legal teams in areas such as Stages in Child Development, Attachment, Basic Child Care, Child Protection, Child Safety, Behaviour Management and the Legislation.
3. Foster Care Approvals: As part of the Foster Care recruitment drive, the Unit assessed and received approval for two traditional foster parents and 5 foster parents, who are kin.

PLACEMENT, LICENSING AND MONITORING (PLM)

1. Admission of 30 children into Children's Homes: Placement, Licensing and Monitoring conducted 30 admissions of residents into Children's Homes. These admissions included children between the ages of five and eleven, high-risk adolescent girls, migrants and low-risk adolescent boys. The Unit also conducted various efforts to expand residential placement options. One such effort included the engagement of a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) that submitted an Expression of Interest for the first-time operation of a Home.
2. PLM officers conducted 105 monitoring visits, 11 inspections, investigated 3 complaints and completed enquiries into 43 critical incidents. The licences for nine (9) Community Residences were successfully renewed during this period.
3. Strengthening of stakeholder engagements with agencies providing services to Children's Homes. The Authority engaged Public Health for support to Homes during a national surge in dengue cases and during short outbreaks of Hand, Foot and Mouth disease at two Homes.

RECEPTION CENTRE

1. The National Care and Empowerment Centre (NCEC), a model Reception Centre, designed to set a national standard in child care services, was launched in October 2024. The Centre provides a safe and nurturing environment, equipped with modern amenities and tailored programming, to meet the holistic needs of children in temporary care.

The Centre's design and operations prioritise child-focused care with an emphasis on trauma-informed practices. It serves as a benchmark facility, embodying the Authority's vision of creating sustainable, high-quality services for vulnerable children across Trinidad and Tobago. This milestone demonstrates the Reception Centre's dedication to enhancing service delivery and ensuring children receive the support they need during their most critical period of adjustment.

2. A partnership was established with the United States Agency for International Development for the Youth Resilience, Inclusion and Empowerment programme (USAID-

YRIE), which secured USD 50,000 to fund the "Harbour of Hope" psychosocial project. This initiative is geared towards addressing the emotional and psychological needs of children in three Reception Centres by providing trauma-informed, holistic interventions that are tailored to their individual experiences.

The funding has allowed the Reception Centre to implement innovative therapeutic programs and build the capacity of staff through specialised training. These efforts ensure that children receive comprehensive psychosocial support, which will empower them to overcome challenges and thrive in their environments. This partnership is an example of the Centre's commitment to resource mobilisation and stakeholder collaboration to improve outcomes for children in care.

CONTACT CENTRE UNIT

1. The Contact Centre remained a hub of activity during the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2024-2025, handling **8,956 interactions** across multiple channels—calls, walk-ins, emails, post-mail, and web reports. Of these, **7,979 were phone calls** received via the Contact Centre's hotline, with agents logging an impressive **586+ hours of talk time**.
2. Customer Satisfaction and Quality Monitoring- The supervision team actively monitors key metrics, customer feedback, and overall performance. Quality Assurance remains a cornerstone of this process, with client satisfaction surveys offering valuable insights. For the period, the Unit achieved an outstanding **98% customer satisfaction rate**, reflecting its dedication to service excellence.
3. Completion of the Outbound Project- December 2024 marked the conclusion of the Outbound Project, a vital initiative focused on managing low and medium-risk cases. Through a mix of tele-social work, in-person interviews, referrals to external agencies, and strategic follow-ups, the project ensured comprehensive case management. Feedback from clients and Intervention Teams has been overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the project's impact.

PEOPLE, LEADERSHIP AND TRANSFORMATION UNIT

1. Recruitment Campaign: The recruitment strategy in Q1 of Fiscal Year 2025 was a significant success, resulting in the hiring of 321 new employees and the acceptance of 51 additional offers. This expansion of the talent pool contributed to an increase in staffing capacity to 77%.

2. Human Resource Information System (HRIS) Lanteria & Performance Management Training: A phased training initiative was launched for the new HRIS and Performance Management System, with 77% of the target population successful trained.
3. Onboarding: The structured onboarding programme successfully integrated 95 new employees into the Authority, ensuring their alignment with the Authority's values and expectations.

CHILD JUSTICE SUPPORT UNIT

The Unit conducted over 1,000 targeted interventions for over 400 Children In Need of Supervision (CHINS) who came to the attention of the Authority. In addition, a particularly outstanding achievement was the successful placement of two siblings with a complex trauma history into loving and supportive families that are not related to the children. This was a milestone achievement for the Authority in its 10-year history, as the organisation obtained Court Orders that enabled the children to be placed with families committed to their well-being. The children are thriving in their environments, which demonstrates the Authority's ability to create positive outcomes for vulnerable children.

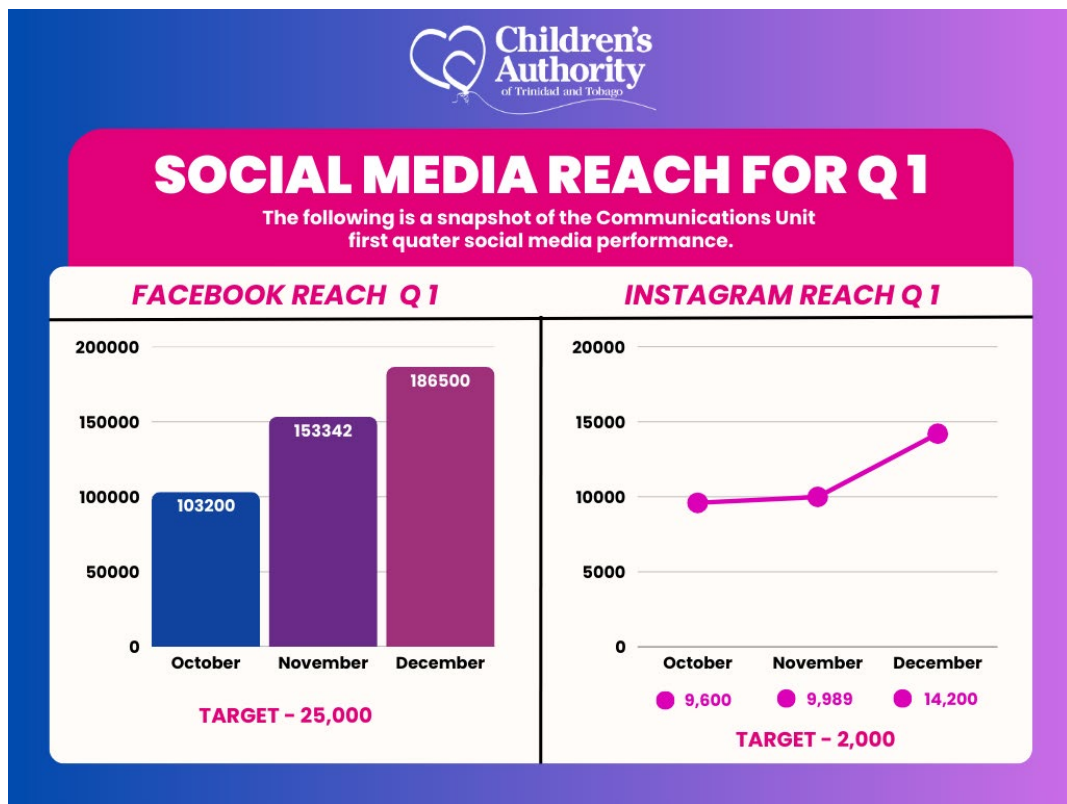
PUBLIC EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

1. Advertising during Caribbean Premier League 2024: Communications is always seeking new avenues to increase its reach and disseminate child protection information to as wide an audience as possible. The Unit partnered with CCN TV6 to advertise child protection messages during the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) T20 cricket, which concluded in October 2024. TV6 assisted in the production of four specially developed video advertisements, which focused on various areas of child protection including, the age of consent and neglect. The advertising package also featured static ads on the CCN Group's mobile and streaming sites as well as "squeezes" which were pop-up ads that appeared at the bottom of the screen during the match. Reports indicated that viewership for this tournament was in the billions, across digital and broadcast platforms
2. World Children's Day Jingle Competition: World Children's Day is UNICEF's annual day of action for children, by children. From climate change, education and mental health, to ending racism and discrimination, children and young people are raising their voices on the issues that matter to their generation and calling for adults to create a better future.

The Unit rolled-out a Jingle Competition as part of the Authority's World Children's Day celebration in November. The competition allowed children to creatively share a child

protection message. There were approximately forty entries from which six entrants were contenders for prizes. The competition was judged by well-known radio personalities, as well as representatives from the Authority and the Office of the Prime Minister (Gender and Child Affairs). The winning jingle has been professionally produced and will be used as part of the Authority’s advertising catalogue.

- Social media continues to be a key tool in the Communication Unit’s arsenal, through which we share information on child protection, child rights and provide parenting tips. Below is a chart which shows the reach the Unit was able to garner through our social media platforms - Facebook and Instagram. As noted in the graph below, the Unit exceeded the targets set.



- Stakeholder engagement is another key facet of the Unit’s work and efforts are made to engage a wide cross section of the society each month. During the period October to December 2024, the Communications Unit engaged 11 groups across Trinidad and Tobago. The groups included Community-Based Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations, Faith-Based Organisations and stakeholder agencies in the child protection sector. See the breakdown below:

SENSITISATIONS FOR Q1

The following is a snapshot of the Communications Unit first quarter sensitisation activity across Trinidad and Tobago.

SENSITISATION BREAKDOWN

